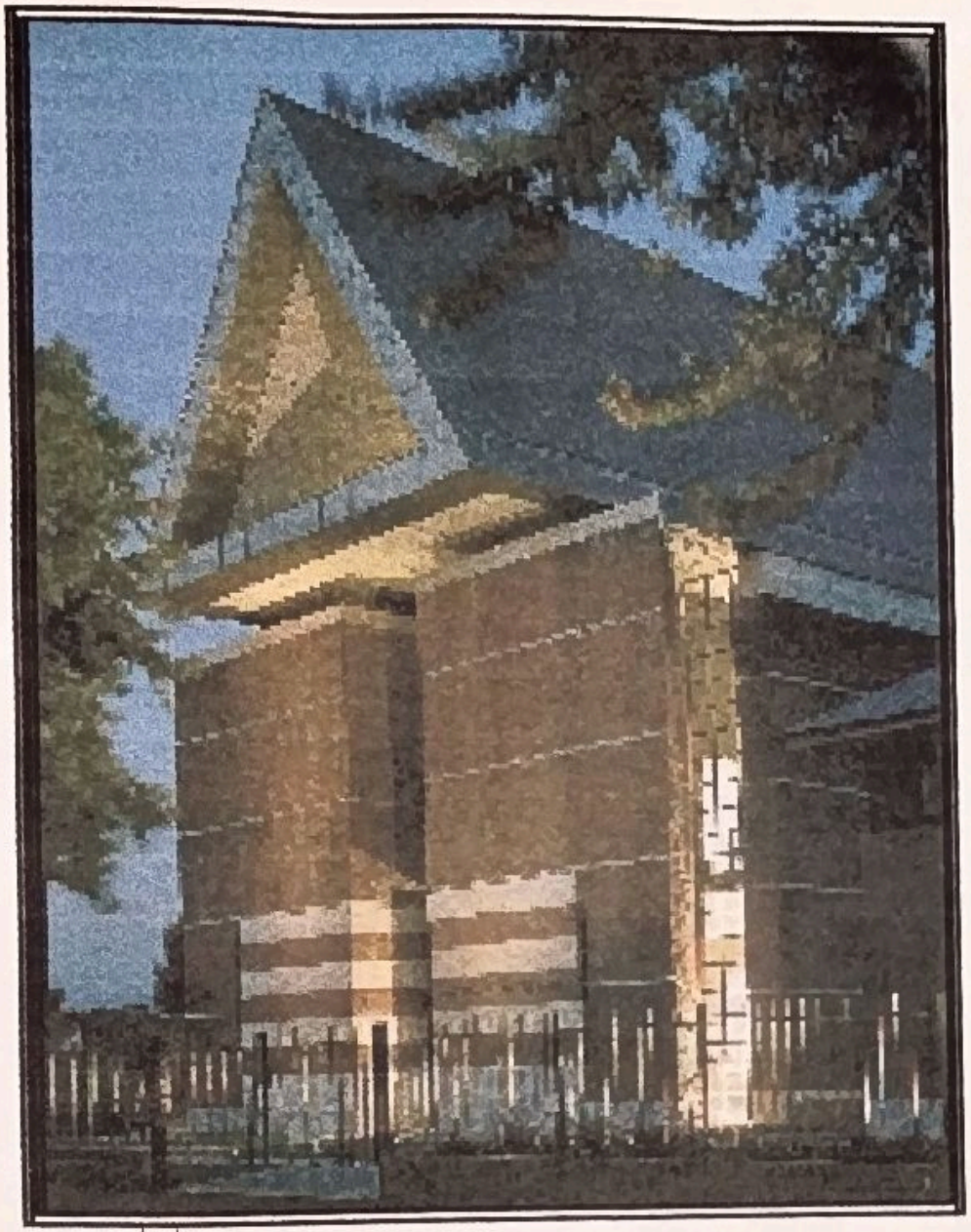

The west front at night

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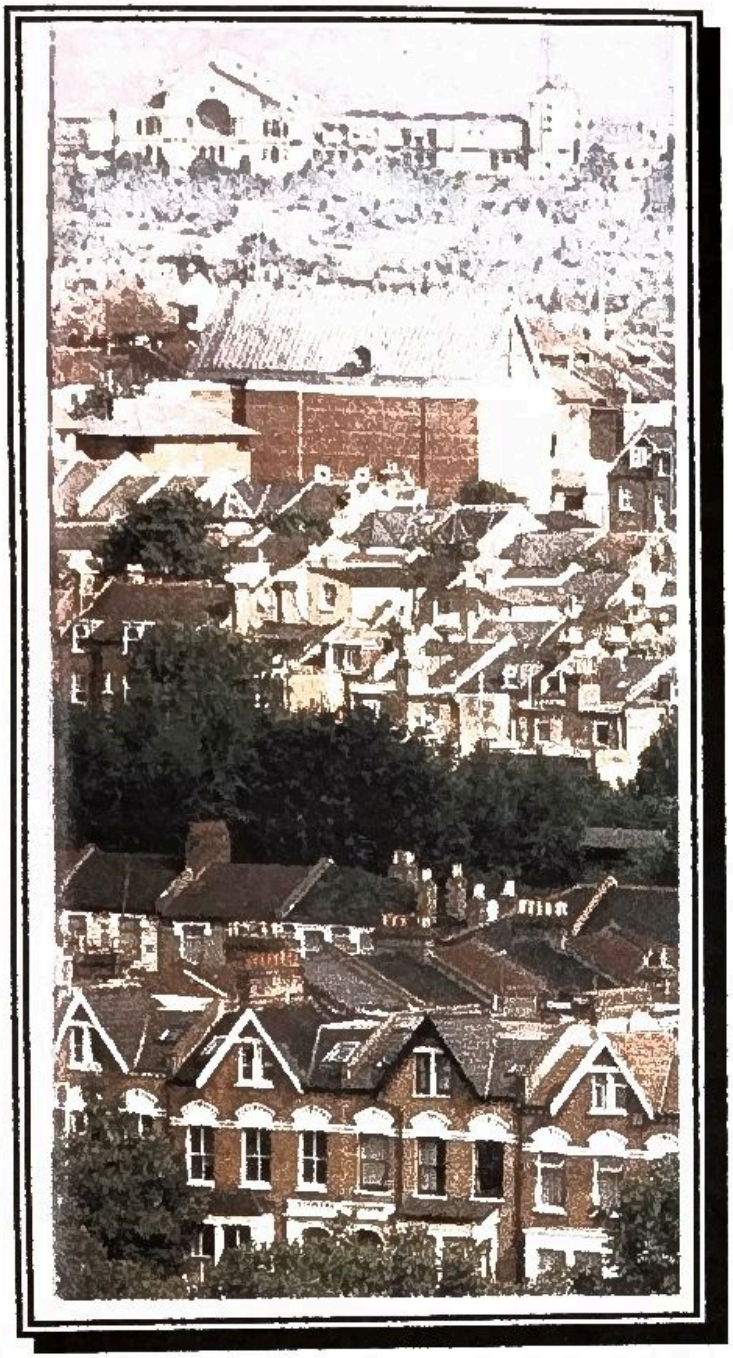
Harringay Parish Church - St Paul's

A visitor's guide

Not to be removed from the church



Harringay Parish. Arial view looking north-east from the Manor House to Alexandra Palace

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Harringay and its Parish Church (St. Paul's) London N4

A brief history of the area

Harringay, now known only for its two railway stations and its church was once most famous for its Greyhound Racing Stadium now long since demolished and replaced with a Sainsbury's supermarket and housing estate. Until the coming of the railway in 1869 the area was largely rural though Tottenham Wood, now Wood Green, had already long gone.

Through Harringay runs Green Lanes a cattle drovers road running from the City of London, north to Enfield and beyond, and the area holds on tight to the steep escarpment of the Lea river valley, over which it looks with views north into Hertfordshire, east to Epping Forest, and south to the City of London. This natural north south route was used by later generations to provide the course for the New River which brought fresh water into London from Hertfordshire, in the 17th century, and the Great North Railway out of Kings Cross in the 19th.

Written records which date from 1552 show it as the property of the Cozens family, and it remained so until 1750 when Edmund Gray, a London linen draper, acquired the estate. The land is situated at one corner of the Hornsey parish, adjacent to Stoke Newington parish in a natural geographical fold. In 1792 a new manor house was begun in stone on the high, prominent site of the old Tudor mansion where Green Lanes rises up and crosses over the modern Seven Sisters Road before its gentle descent to Turnpike Lane. Following the death of Edward Gray the estate was broken up and the manor house demolished. It is now remembered only in the name of the Manor House pub and the tube station of the Piccadilly line at the site.

The coming of two railway lines in the third quarter of the nineteenth century had made all this land very valuable for development, and the area soon became covered in housing, the only exception being Hornsey Wood which when put up for sale was bought by the Borough of Finsbury as open space for its inhabitants in 1869 - thus becoming one of the very first municipal parks. Only the Hornsey Wood Tavern recalls its previous name. It was here on 4th May 1483 that Hall's Chronicle records the occasion when the boy King Edward V was met by his uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester and escorted to the Capital. Edward's father had recently died, and he was coming to London to claim the throne. Two months later he was removed from the throne by his uncle Richard who became Richard III, having reputedly arranged the murder of Edward and his younger brother in the Tower of London.

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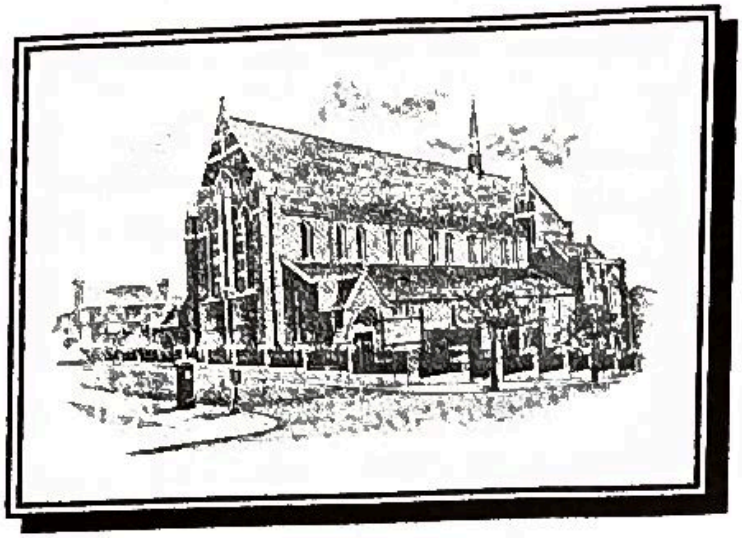

Harringay Parish Church as it appeared until 1984

Harringay Parish Church - the altar and reredos before 1984

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A brief history of the parish 1883- 1984

The Reverend Joshua Greaves came to a fast growing housing estate where there were open spaces and fields in the year 1883 and this was to become the parish of St. Paul's Harringay formed out of Holy Trinity Stroud Green, St. Anne's Stamford Hill and St. Mary's Hornsey. A tin hut mission church had been established, and opened for worship on 23 December when there were six communicants and a collection of 14s 3d. The digging of the ground preparatory to building the first church was on Tuesday May 20th 1890. The foundation stone was laid in Whitsun week on Saturday May 31st 1890. by Lady Wolseley. On 1 October 1891 the Bishop of London, Dr Frederick Temple consecrated St. Paul's Church Harringay.

The church was built of red brick with Carsham stone dressing. The fleche could be seen from the Kings Cross railway line. The building was built in brick, the style of 13th century English Gothic with lofty nave arcades and lean to aisles. The architect was George Michael Silley of London. The chancel and Lady Chapel were not completed until 1903 in a later Decorated English Gothic style. The total length of nave and chancel when complete was 130 feet the width 28 feel. The height from floor level was 37 feet. Completed the building could hold 900 people.

At the entrance to the chancel was an oak screen. The choir stalls stood collegiate fashion in the chancel leading up to the altar of white marble.There was a magnificent organ made by J. W. Walker and Sons maintained by Hill, Norman, and Beard Ltd. of Hornsey. The altar, font cover and reredos with a statue of Christ and other stone figures were designed and installed in 1932 by Cachemaille Day. The font was of marble with a war memorial to the 1914-18 war. The stained glass windows were designed by Bryan Shaw.

The ecclesiastical parish of St. Paul's Harringay was formed on the 28th June 1892 . The living was net yearly value £387 with benefice. A large house was erected in 1903. The Church Hall was in Cavendish Road. Joshua Greaves remained the Vicar for 40 years. The incumbents succeeding him were Revs Appleton, Warren, Brassel, Cowen, Bond, Barraclough, Lloyd, Seeley, and Martin.

On Ash Wednesday 1984 the roof caught fire and the church burned down. Workmen repairing a hole in the roof at the time were unable to stop the flames.

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The nave looking east - after the fire of 1984

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A phoenix rising

Since the dramatic fire, a determined effort was made by the local community in not merely rebuilding, but actually re-establishing their church as a vital landmark, both in the physical urban landscape and in the consciousness of its inhabitants. The sale of part of the damaged site to Quadrant Housing Association, and insurance money raised £650.000 for the rebuilding.

The process of completing the design to the satisfaction of the Vicar and the congregation was simple compared with the process of getting planning approval from the London Borough of Haringey. which demanded that any new church building should be in no way differentiated from surrounding housing. Rather than the "bungalow" model so widely favoured for new churches today, the St Paul's congregation, wanted a building with a clearly celebratory purpose. Ironically, Peter Jenkins has used a model which might actually be interpreted as no more than a rather distinguished and ancient prototype of the bungalow: the "megatron", traditional in Greeee since Mycenaean times, and believed by some to be the ancestor of the Doric temple. There seemed to have been resistance by Haringey Council to the resurgence in a new form of a Victorian Gothic church destroyed by fire and to the simplicity and monumental scale of its replacement. Awkward that the church should want to come back at all, in a secular age. Why couldn't the architect do something vaguely vernacular or arts 'n' craftsy, something inoffensive and inconspicuous? Why did he have to be so bold? It's in a street of two-storey houses. Doesn't it disrupt the scale terribly? In fact there are already two churches at the north end of Wightman Road, but they have been disrupting the residential scale long enough so that no one notices any more.

At a crucial moment in the stand off, Peter Jenkins persuaded the Vicar to transport a couple of busloads of the congregation to the Civic Centre, where the Chair of the Planning Committee welcomed them, thinking they were about to protest at the unwelcome planned intrusion into their neighbourhood. When the moment came to appeal to the gallery (a regular 'democratic' practice by Haringey Council), the cries of support for the project caused the councillor to grow pale and opened the way to the planning approval.

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Harringay Parish Church - a view of the west end showing the main architectural features

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The new building from outside

The new St Paul's is a small church, and much smaller than the old Victorian Gothic building, seating only 140 people but it has a large presence, and its form is no less symbolic and monumental. If St Paul's Harringay is recognisable as a church, it is not surprising to find that the architect has wanted to communicate purpose directly and has thought about church and temple as types, as examples that fall into place in a social sense. The image of 'church' results not from direct reference but from a generalised loftiness. It is also true that the view of the east end above roofs from lower down Cavendish Road says 'church' in a more familiar, almost medieval way. But this is not pop architecture. The form of the church is barn like, somewhat in the manner of St Paul's Covent Garden. Inside, the pitched roof crowning the vertical space of the nave belongs to the tradition of church spaces: the roof responds to the nave. But on the outside it appears self-sufficient, floating in space. There was a specific archaic image in the architect's mind, the primitive temple represented in the terra-cotta model from Argos (Greece), where the roof produced an equilateral triangle long before the pediment had reached its classical form.

The distinctive feature of the traditional Greek 'megatron' form, otherwise simply a square or oblong room with a hearth, like a "primitive hut', is the projection of the side walls beyond the entrance to form a porch. In Peter Jenkins' modern Anglican version of an ancient pagan idea, this feature is strikingly interpreted as two projecting triangular "towers", sheltering and partly concealing the main entrance door between them. The unusual entrance facade which this produces is surmounted by the hollow gable-end of an equilateral truss roof, designed by Michael Courtney of Ove Arup & Partners, This pedimental triangle overhangs the entrance to St Paul's church just as a formal portico does, but there are no columns as you would expect. Columns have disappeared into the angled towers that spread the frontal plane and allow access to the bell tower and organ loft. The spread of these towers shields the interior west end from direct light and obscures the view of the houses opposite. The result admittedly is to mystify and create a somewhat disquieting effect. The roof acts as a wind girder to stabilise the whole structure.

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The church underconstruction

- seen from Wightman Road

The predominant facing material is red stock brick Broad bands of reconstructed stone at plinth and eaves and narrower band courses within the walling give a horizontal emphasis to the general mass The entrance is marked by wide band courses of reconstructed stone The main entrance doors are black-framed and deeply recessed, a design device that minimises their scale - lessening their visual competition with the simplicity of the broad planes and simple shapes of the walls and roof The brick diaphragm walls enclose the simple rectangular plan of the body of the church The quality of geometric forms is emphasised by the absence of external ornamental detail and any but the most understated fenestration.

Apart from the historic aspects of the design, the new church also makes clear references to recent architectural history notably the rationalist tradition. It is appropriate then that it should be dedicated to St Paul, for whom the conflict between the 'mysteries of faith' and the 'tradition of reason' which had been developed by the Greek philosophers, was particularly problematic. Is this church afflicted by the same dichotomy? The simple 'reason' of its external form seems to deny the possibility of 'mystery' within. Without entering the observer cannot tell.

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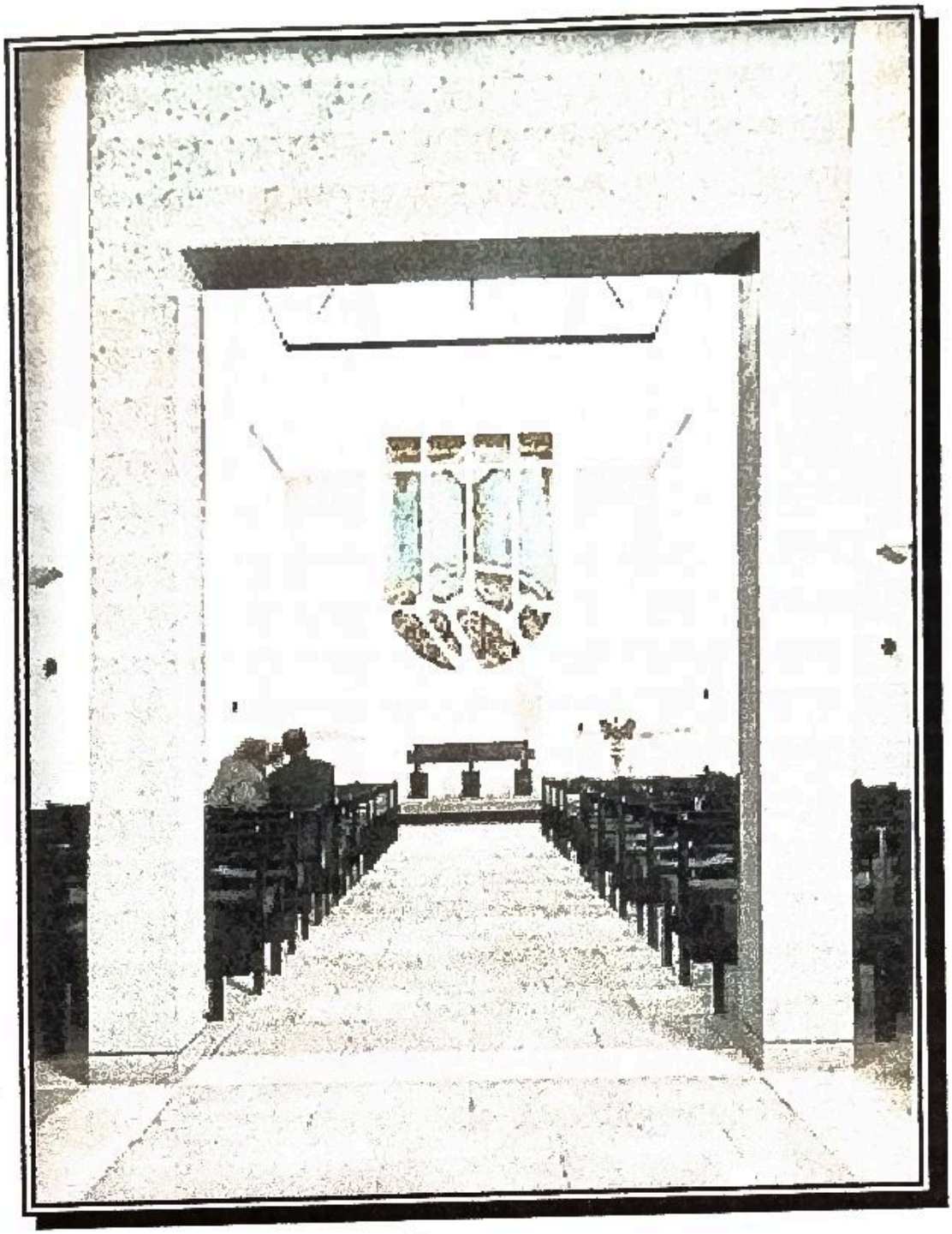

Harringay Parish Church.

Interior view eastward showing the altar and reredos by sculptor Stephen Cox

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The building inside

If the outside appears simple yet is complex, the inside is simpler and more complex still. The space is carefully programmed. As is traditional, entry is from the west end into an introductory space, the 'narthex', below the choir and organ gallery which overlooks the nave. The wall surfaces are plain white-painted brickwork. Here the baptismal font is located, symbolically, at the entrance of the nave, the body of the church. In the narthex and the choir gallery above, tall recessed areas in the wall surfaces mark the different nature of these areas.

Progression into the nave is through a simple, freestanding portal frame. In the nave the walls too are plain with discreet lighting and simple Stations of the Cross are the only fittings. The simple plan lends itself to ready interpretation as a traditional liturgical space, characterised by the hierarchical placing of the altar at the east end. There is no rood screen at the transition to the sanctuary, as in the previous church, but a 300 mm step up in the floor level and bold recessing of the wall surface which creates a cross-like form extending onto the flank walls and defines the area of the sanctuary. The visual progression through the church culminates in the reredos.

Although the traditional 'megatron' should be defined by a centrally located hearth, its focus, the liturgical preferences of this congregation ordained that this was rejected. To have the focus of this church, its altar, at the centre in a "boxing-ring" type of model, otherwise known as the "altar in the round", was not acceptable.

Day lighting is carefully controlled and the space is lit primarily from above via the glazed gable ends of the roof. Light percolates through but is diffused by an inner triangle. Light and space work together. The eye is inexorably drawn upward. Careful design ensures that the level of day lighting is graded to be greatest at the sanctuary end. Three small square windows, deeply recessed just above head height along each of the lateral walls, complement this source allowing beams of sunlight to enter in an almost domestic way. These windows are carefully positioned with asymmetrically splayed reveals so that they are not seen directly from the west end of the church and therefore do not distract attention from the sanctuary. In the towers, long narrow window slits illuminate their interiors in a somewhat oblique and mysterious manner.

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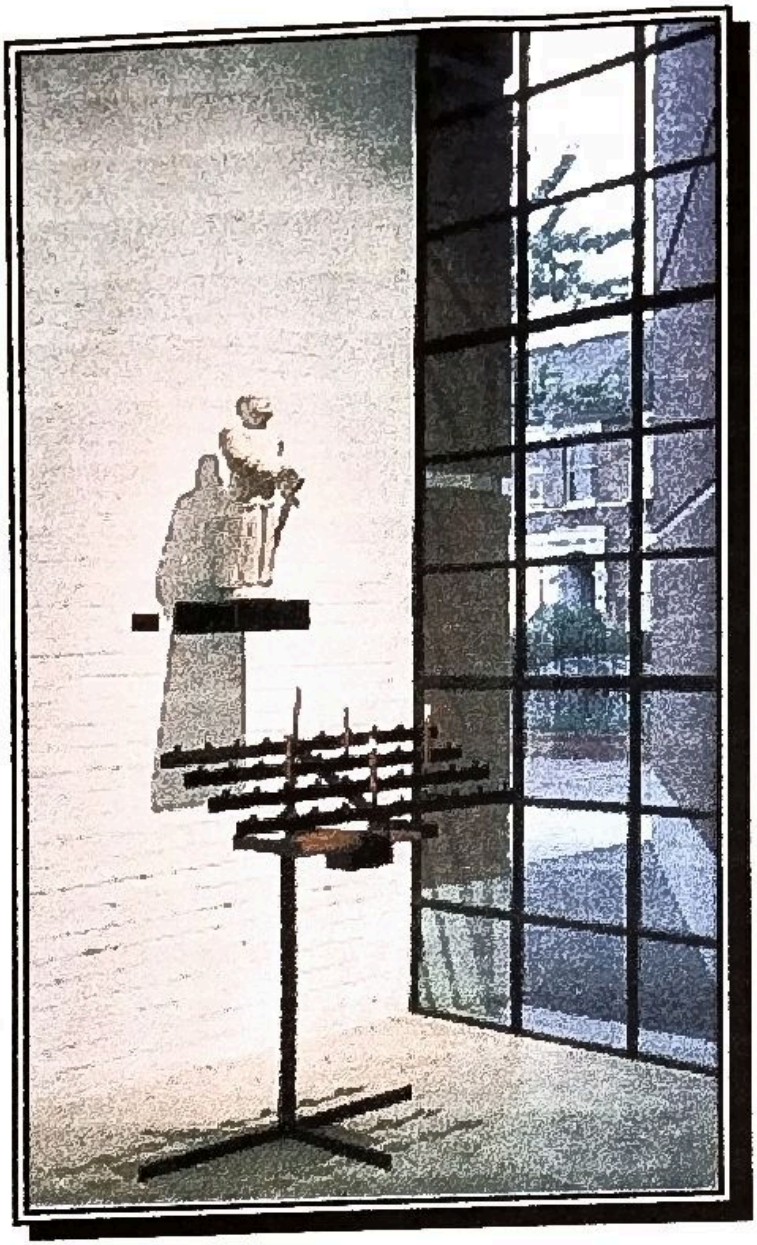

Statue of St. Paul by sculptor
Danny Clahane

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The interior fittings

The interior is enhanced by sculpture specially commissioned from Stephen Cox. The reredos, in travertine stained with copper and iron oxides, depicts Christ on the cross above the fragmented map of the Mediterranean world in which the principal cities visited by St Paul are indicated. The crucifix rises against a cerulean blue background and this carries the eye on and up to the infinity of the sky beyond, viewed through the principal window in the east gable end. The skulls and bones below remind us not only of Golgotha, the place of the skull, where Christ was crucified, but they also have resonances in the artist's mind to symbols in Italian renaissance religious art. Because the side windows in the nave are above eye level, only sky can be seen and the symbolism of the sky as infinity is not compromised. The success of this symbolic progression is enhanced by the lofty proportion of the building and the steeply pitched roof.

Stephen Cox has also provided an altar table (held by three stone crosses which echo the reredos and rest on bases of breccia) , altar lamps, a font, stations of the cross, aumbry and sanctuary lamp all made out of Imperial Egyptian porphyry from the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. Below the new altar the old foundation stone, bearing St Paul's message to the Ephesians in Greek, has been reinstated, further emphasising the significance of the east end. This simple stone sculpture with its Greek inscription heightens the sense of primitive origins and serve as a reminder of times predating those of liturgical dissent and conflict. Statues of St Paul and St Anthony opposite the font are by Danny Clahane. Everything is designed in a minimalist mode, producing an impressive stillness.

The exploitation of a I in 6 sloping site allows the sacristy and servers' vestry to be placed below the sanctuary at the east end. This arrangement avoids doors or openings interrupting the continuity of enclosure of the nave and sanctuary, while Choir room, chair stores, the staircase to gallery and organ are located at the west end of the church in the triangular twin towers.

Two furnishings from the old church were rescued and have been incorporated in the new building - the bell, cast in 1891 by John Warner, which rings three times a day through an electronic Angelus, and the brass eagle which has become both lectern and pulpit. The church silver which had been in the safe was also saved and is still in use.

The fine organ by Richard Bower, is described in a separate leaflet.

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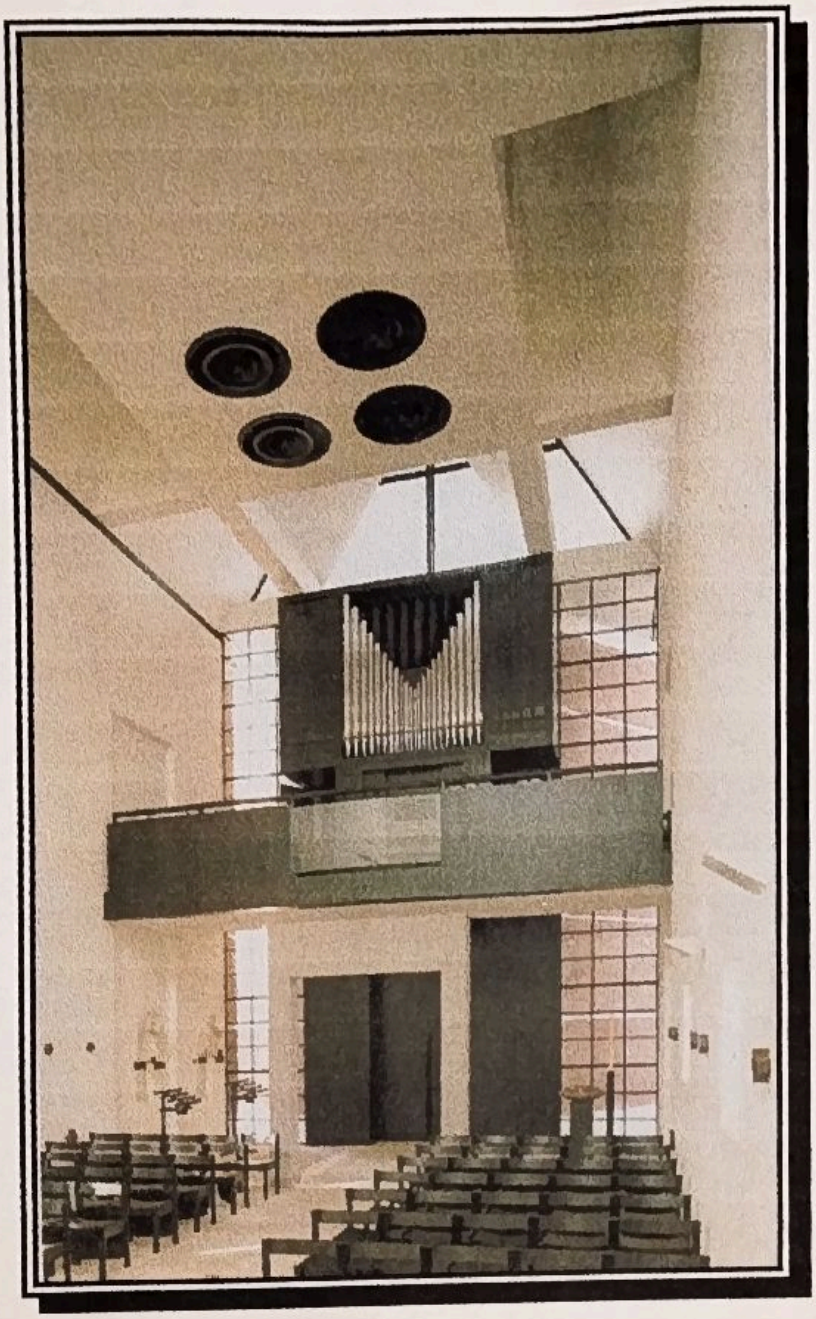

Harringay Parish Church. The west end showing the organ by Richard Bower of Norwich, which was installed in 1993.

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In conclusion

As well as the church a new vicarage and garden are all incorporated within the site which formerly accommodated a vicarage as well as the church, and although all the parts are designed in the same idiom, we have no difficulty in reading 'church' and 'vicarage'; each part takes up its appropriate value. The continued existence of the old church hall, housing a whole range of community functions, freed the architect from the necessity of turning the worship building itself into a multi functional centre with the inevitable kitchens and toilets

Harringay's parish church is thoroughly designed, down to the last detail, yet achieves a rare simplicity. It is as stylish as a designer restaurant, yet doesn't appear fancy. The design goes back to 1984 yet it doesn't look dated. That's quite an achievement. This is architecture which tries to combine traditional meanings with the crispness of modernity. It works the abstract and the representational into a tight embrace. Is this rationalist architecture? It seems so. It has been pondered, worked upon to distil 'emotion', but only after 'reason'. It works with modern know-how as well as real stone. The tall walls hold together and are stabilised by the steel structure of the roof, braced in both directions. Warmed air descends, like the Holy Spirit, through the architect's careful mediation: grace within a tight budget.

The old church seated 900 people and was visible for miles, its modern replacement is no less a focal point for the parish. The red brick, stone faced building , roofed in zinc, is set high on the hill in sight of the cosmopolitan community, mainly Cypriot and West Indian which it serves. Today's congregation may be very different the original suburban Victorian inhabitants, and may change again over the next few years, as another generation starts to take advantage of the twelve minutes' rail journey time from Harringay to Moorgate, Kings Cros, and the West End of London..

The unusual opportunity to create a building of beauty dedicated both to meditation and festival is one which Peter Jenkins and his team have taken up with enthusiasm and handled with care. The fruits of the determination and energy of this Harringay congregation constitute a valuable and unusual addition to the otherwise meagre corpus of contemporary ecclesiastical architecture. Now the congregation have their church and they know it as a church. It has a numinous presence, which is the product of a simple equation Architecture = Space x Light.

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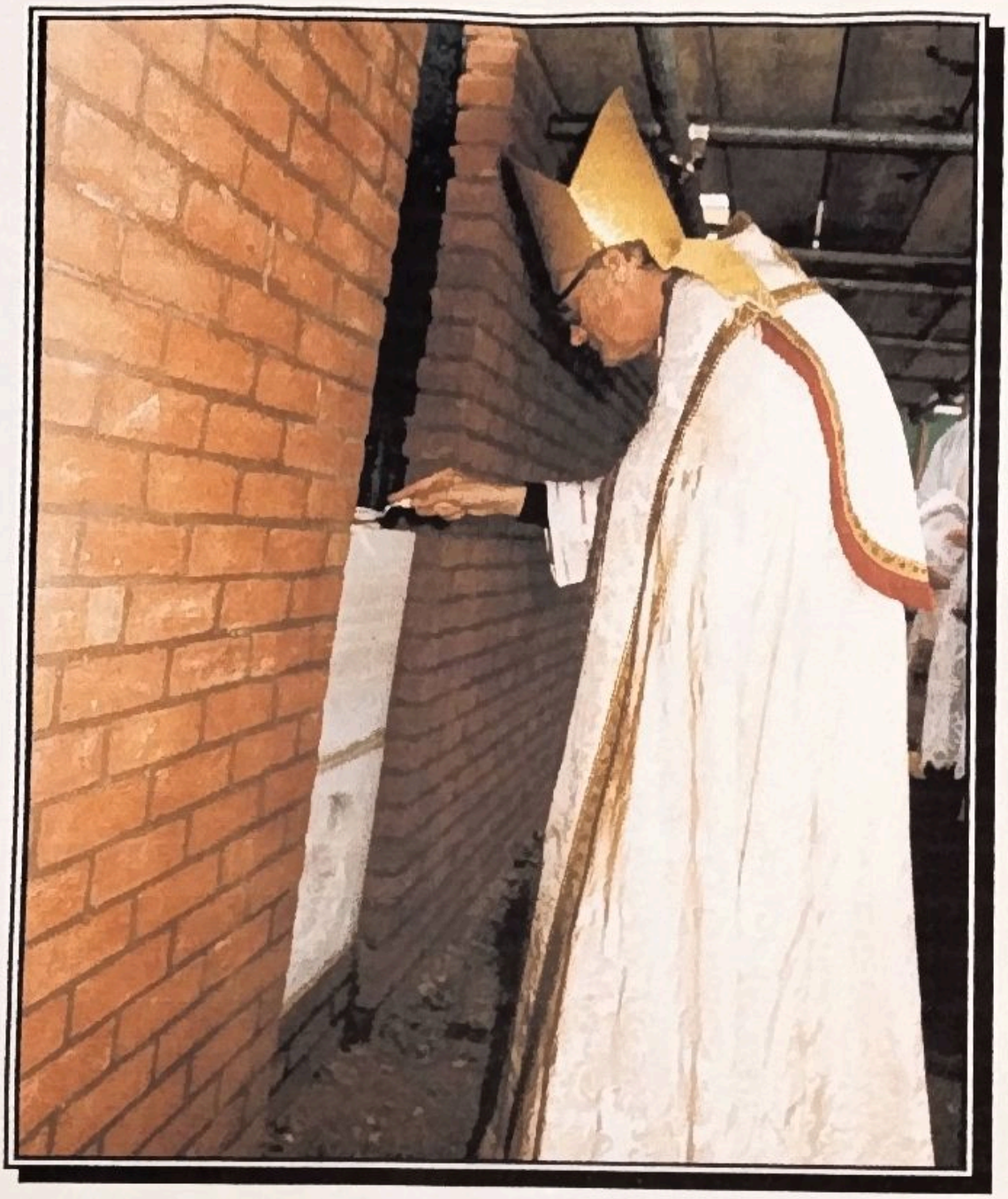

1993. The Bishop of Edmonton - The Right Reverend Brian Masters - laying the foundation stone.

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Technical note

The building's strong and simple form has some interesting technical aspects with regard to the brickwork. The architectural imagery of a simple rectangular box is well expressed by the choice of the brick construction. Plain walls inside and out are subtly modelled or decorated for aesthetic purposes rather than to accommodate structural features

The structural system is a brickwork diaphragm wall in which the inner and outer leaves (each of 103 mm thickness) are stiffened by 103 mm thick vertical cross ribs at 900 mm horizontal centres. These ribs are bonded into the inner leaf and fixed to the outer leaf with stainless steel shear ties. The external leaf is of clay stock facing bricks and the inner leaf and ribs are of clay commons. The width of the wall overall is generally 553 mm but at the sanctuary end the wall thickness is increased to 1003 mm to allow for the strong modelling of the wall that differentiates this part of the interior from the nave.

Glass wool cavity insulation is fixed to the inner-leaf brickwork within the voids of the diaphragm construction. The shear tie fixings of the outer leaf allow the incorporation of a bituminous emulsion vertical damp-proof membrane at the intersection of the diaphragm ribs and the outer, weathered leaf of brickwork.

At the top of the diaphragm walls a ring beam of reinforced concrete forms the bearing and fixing for the triangular, steel-framed roof truss. Its structural stiffness is used to give stability to the tops of the tall brickwork walls.

To accommodate the 1 in 6 slope of the site the reinforced concrete floor slab is supported on reinforced concrete foundation walls which together form an upside down box structure. Where this is exposed at the lower part of the site it is faced with brickwork to match and be flush with the brickwork of the diaphragm walls above.

The length of the building is such that two vertical movement control joints are required in each of the longitudinal walls. They are positioned at the transition from the narthex to the nave and also from the nave to the sanctuary - there is a slight setback in the alignment of the wall between them, which gives a subtle indication in the outer face of the wall of the location of the special areas within the church.

The brick diaphragm wall has been an eminently suitable and economical form of construction for this building. It has also offered opportunities for subtle or strong modelling as well as for broad, simple planes of walling. These have been exploited in the creation of a bold, well proportioned exterior and the calm beauty of the space within.

The brickwork has made a significant contribution to the refined architecture that gives this new church its exceptional presence.

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Christmas 1998. The children of Harringay Parish present their Nativity Play.

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Project team

- Architect: Peter Inskip + Peter Jenkins.
- Design team: Peter Jenkins, Terry McCarthy, Honor Thompson, Narendra Gajjar, Tim Godsmark, Bob Edgar
- Structural Engineer: Ove Arup & Partners (Michael Courtney).
- Mechanical Engineer: James Briggs.
- Quantity Surveyor : Davis Langdon & Everest.
- Contractor: J.J. McGinley.

Selected subcontractors and suppliers

- Facing bricks: Blockleys. Commons: London Brick Company.
- Cast stone: Heritage Stone, Bison Concrete Products.
- Roof steel: Watford Welding.
- Roof: Sogem/Metizinc.
- Heating: Astro.
- Steel windows: NSB Casements.
- Plasterboard: British Gypsum.
- Ash-faced ply: William & Eden.
- Railings etc: Singer & James.
- NW goods: Glynwed Foundries.
- Lighting: Concord, Erco
- Insulation: Gyproc.
- Drainage: Hepworth
- Building Products. Mortars: RMC.
- Paviors: Stowells.
- Spiral stair: Albion.
- Glazing: Pilkington Glass.
- Masonry Fixings : Harris & Edgar.

Compiled and edited - Andrew Pink April 1998

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1998 - SKINNER D. manuscripts. unpublished

Journals

1990 Church Building. Issue of Summer 1990
1993 Architecture Today. Issue 43. November.
1993 Building Design. Issue of 3 September

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Icon of St. Paul

BRICK BULLETIN

6

8

16

22

Autumn 199

PROJECT PROFILE

PARISH CHURCH

SPIRITUAL ELEVATION

St. Paul's Church, Wightman Road, Harringay, London N4

The striking presence of this new church in north London derives from its bold geometric forms. A brick diaphragm wall structure allows simplicity of expression to be maintained both externally and internally.

CLIENT:
The Vicar and Church Wardens of St Paul's Church, Harringay

ARCHITECT:
Peter Inskip & Peter Jenkins : Peter Jenkins

QUANTITY SURVEYOR:
Davis, Langdon and Everest

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:
Ove Arup & Partners : Michael Courtney

CONTRACTOR:
J J McGinley

Other detailed appraisals of this building have been published in:
Architecture Today:
April 1991,
November 1991
Building Design:
25 May 1990,
3 September 1993
Church Building:
July/August 1994

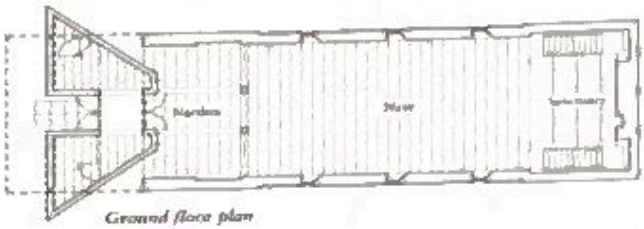
ST PAUL'S CHURCH is a somewhat surprising new church to find in a north London district such as Harringay. Monumental, formal, lofty with clearly defined liturgical characteristics and a high order of artistic refinement, it is the antithesis of the flexibly planned, multi-functional celebratory/social building that typifies many suburban churches built in recent decades.

It was built to replace a Victorian predecessor destroyed by fire in 1984. The original church was much larger than required by the present congregation and the site included a large vicarage and also a modern church hall, which still serves a range of community functions. To help fund the new church, part of the original site was sold for development by a housing association and the original vicarage demolished to allow for the effective development of the remaining part of the site.

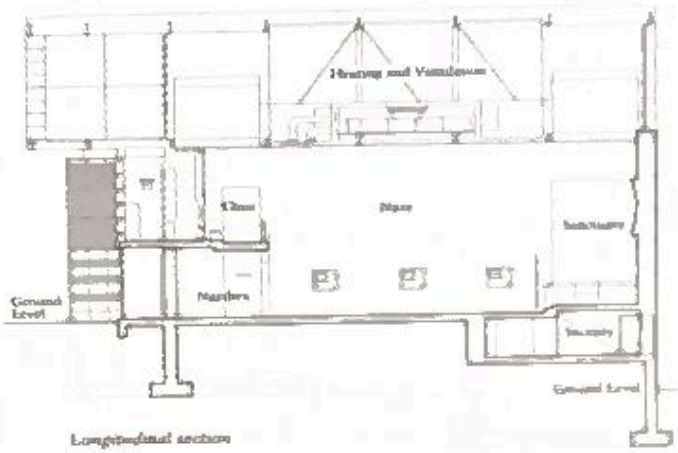
The St Paul's clergy and congregation being High Anglican wished for their new church to be essentially celebratory, with emphasis placed on the sacrifice of the Crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ. The axial, processional planning of the building to meet this requirement led to a long rectangular planform. This is in marked contrast to many modern churches in which congregations are arranged around centrally placed altars to give an emphasis to the participatory nature of the Communion. The loftiness of St Paul's is another striking feature that sets it apart from many contemporary churches and this, too, owes its origin to the liturgical programme.

The new church has a dominant presence on its corner site. It's basic form is of strong, carefully proportioned, simple geometric volumes - a lofty rectangular box roofed with an equilateral triangular volume and fronted by twin triangular towers, which together present a slotted, flat entrance façade to the main road. Entrance doors and fenestration (which is minimal) are black-framed and deeply recessed, a design device that minimises both their scale - giving potential and their visual competition with the simplicity of the broad planes and simple shapes of the walls and roof.

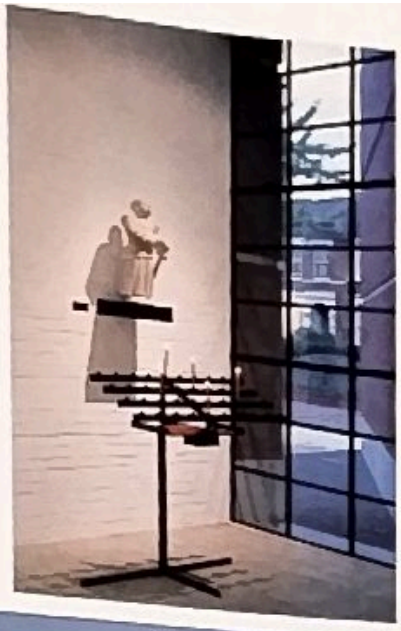
The predominant facing material is red stock brick. Broad bands of reconstructed stone at plinth and eaves



Ground floor plan



Longitudinal section



Far left: The nave is entered through a symbolic portal. The reredos by sculptor Steven Cox dominates the interior.

Left: Sculpture of St Paul in the narthex by Danny Clohane.

Below: View from Wightman Road.

and narrower band courses within the walling give a horizontal emphasis to the general mass. The entrance is marked by wide band courses of reconstructed stone which flank and wrap into the recess containing the door.

The interior

Sir Ninian Comper (1864-1960), himself a great church architect, said that a church should bring you to your knees when you first enter it. The tranquillity and clarity of purpose of the interior of St Paul's has that quality.

The space is carefully programmed. As is traditional, entry is from the west end into an introductory space, the narthex, below the choir and organ gallery which overlooks the nave. Here the baptismal font is located, symbolically, at the entrance of the nave, the body of the church. Progression into the nave is through a simple, freestanding portal frame. Here 120 seats face the sanctuary at the eastern end. There is no rood screen at the transition to the sanctuary but it is marked by a 300 mm step up in the floor level.

The wall surfaces are plain white-painted brickwork with rectangular recesses to subtly differentiate the three liturgical areas. In the nave the walls are plain with discreet lighting and simple Stations of the Cross as the only fittings. In the narthex and the choir gallery above, tall recessed areas in the wall surfaces mark the different nature of these areas. Behind the altar at the east end a much bolder recessing of the wall surface creates a cross-like form which extends onto the flank walls and defines the area of the sanctuary.

Day-lighting is carefully controlled. It is principally from high level glazing in the triangular ends of the roof structure. Over the sanctuary, a pitched reflective panel directs light downwards. Further daylight is introduced through similar glazing at the west end of the roof and also through narrow vertical windows flanking the entrance. Careful design ensures that the level of day-lighting is graded to be greatest at the sanctuary end. Three small windows in each side of the wall of the nave make minor contributions to day-lighting. These are carefully positioned with asymmetrically splayed reveals so that they are not seen directly from the west end of the church and therefore do not distract attention from the sanctuary.

The visual progression through the church culminates in the reredos, by sculptor Steven Cox who also sculpted the altar of Egyptian Imperial porphyry and the font. The lower part of the reredos depicts a map of the Mediterranean world in which the principal cities visited by St Paul are indicated. Above this rises a Crucifix against a cerulean blue background and this carries the eye on and up to the infinity of the sky beyond, viewed through the principal window in the east gable end. Because the side windows in the nave are above eye-level, only sky can be seen and the symbolism of the sky as infinity is not compromised. The success of this symbolic progression is enhanced by the lofty proportion of the building and the steeply pitched roof.

Due to the slope of the site the sacristy is located below the sanctuary with access to it by a flight of stairs on either side. This arrangement avoids doors or openings interrupting the continuity of enclosure of the nave and sanctuary. Choir room, chair stores, the staircase to gallery and organ are located at the west end of the church in attached triangular twin towers. These are positioned so that splayed walls shield the vertical fenestration at either side of the entrance from glare and

West end from the nave. Heating and ventilation distribution is from the ceiling.

direct views into and out of the church.

The simplicity of form and consistency of its liturgical character gives the interior of this church an atmosphere of great tranquillity very appropriate to reverential worship.

Technical comment

The building's strong and simple form has some interesting technical aspects with regard to the brickwork. The architectural imagery of a simple rectangular box is well expressed by the choice of the brick construction. Plain walls inside and out are subtly modelled or decorated for aesthetic purposes rather than to accommodate structural features.

The structural system is a brickwork diaphragm wall in which the inner and outer leaves (each of 103 mm thickness) are stiffened by 103 mm thick vertical cross ribs at 900 mm horizontal centres. These ribs are bonded into the inner leaf and fixed to the outer leaf with stainless steel shear ties. The external leaf is of clay stock facing bricks and the inner leaf and ribs are of clay commons. The width of the wall overall is generally 553 mm but at the sanctuary end the wall thickness is increased to 1003 mm to allow for the strong modelling of the wall that differentiates this part of the interior from the nave.

Glass wool cavity insulation is fixed to the inner-leaf brickwork within the voids of the diaphragm construction. The shear tie fixings of the outer leaf allow the incorporation of a bituminous emulsion vertical damp-proof membrane at the intersection of the diaphragm ribs and the outer, weathered leaf of brickwork.

At the top of the diaphragm walls a ring beam of reinforced concrete forms the bearing and fixing for the triangular, steel-framed roof truss. Its structural stiffness is used to give stability to the tops of the tall brickwork walls.

To accommodate the 1 in 6 slope of the site the reinforced concrete floor slab is supported on reinforced concrete foundation walls which together form an upside down box structure. Where this is exposed at the lower part of the site it is faced with brickwork to match and be flush with the brickwork of the diaphragm walls above.

The length of the building is such that two vertical movement control joints are required in each of the longitudinal walls. They are positioned at the transition from the narthex to the nave and also from the nave to the sanctuary - there is a slight setback in the alignment of the wall between them, which gives a subtle indication in the outer face of the wall of the location of the special areas within the church.

The brick diaphragm wall has been an eminently suitable and economical form of construction for this building. It has also offered opportunities for subtle or strong modelling as well as for broad, simple planes of walling. These have been exploited in the creation of a bold, well proportioned exterior and the calm beauty of the space within.

Thus brickwork, in a primarily structural form, has made a significant contribution to the refined architecture that gives this new church its exceptional presence. ☐